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kickSTART:Karriere- **Your Launch Into Employment**

Fit4Wrk

German Work Culture

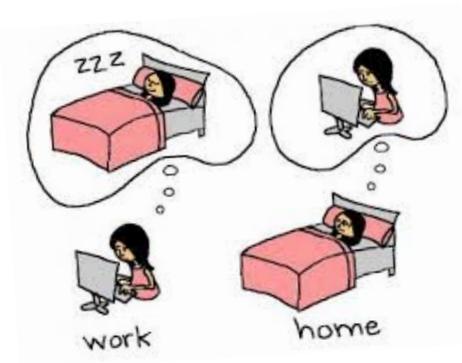
International Student?
Looking to work in the area?
Start your
CAREER
with us!

- Job-Search Strategy
- CV Guidance
- Workshops
- Competency Training
- Company Networking
- Career Counselling

A graphic showing a person's hands holding a document over a laptop keyboard. The text 'International Student? Looking to work in the area? Start your CAREER with us!' is overlaid. To the right, a vertical list of services is shown in grey boxes with white text: Job-Search Strategy, CV Guidance, Workshops, Competency Training, Company Networking, and Career Counselling.

Work Needs to Have an End

- Neither the professional, nor the private life should exhaust the personal resources one-sidedly, so that one of the two takes damage
- Germans **strictly separate work- and private-life**
- Strictly regulated working hours (definite rules) are important to ensure a sufficient period of regeneration
- **Goal: Only who is well-rested can deliver a 100% performance**



Uncommon in Germany are:

- Telephone calls & Emails after working hours

- Extended after-work drinks/parties with colleagues. (Germans prefer to spend time with family)



- Voluntary overtime e.g. to impress the boss

- Interruptions during vacation (e.g. calls by manager)

How Do Germans **Negotiate**?

- A business meeting for Germans is **simply an official appointment** that all participants should be as well prepared for as possible
- A **spontaneous/ unplanned course** of negotiations is **undesired**
- **Professionalism** and detailed **specialization** are central criteria in a German company
- **Germans expect the same attitude from their business partners**
- When negotiating with German business people **listen to the presenter very carefully** without trying to interrupt



How Do Germans **Negotiate**?

- Write down possible questions to be asked at the end. Exception: if you are encouraged to ask in between
- Germans **do not fear conflict**, they might even consider it necessary. **Conflict does however not mean war**, or the end of the relationship. They will search for a mutually beneficial solution



Most Important Virtue- **Punctuality/Pünktlichkeit**

- Due to the strive for highest efficiency, **lost time** for Germans is equal to a **waste of resources**
- That is why punctuality has the highest priority in all work-and company regards
- **“No time for bullshit!”**
- Being too early however, is also not always positive- If you are too early, there often is not yet something to do, as the business process only starts slowly. **Orientate yourself towards your colleagues**

*Fünf Minuten
vor der Zeit
ist des
Deutschen
Pünktlichkeit*



Communication & Collegial Relationships

Reticence

Colleagues
are not
immediately
friends



- Germans precisely **distinguish between work and leisure time, business vs. privacy, colleagues vs. friends**
- At work you are **supposed to work, not discuss pets or your grandmother's health** (which in other cultures is completely normal)
- Most Germans tend to find friendships in private life through their hobbies
- This however does not mean you should feel alone, or that nobody is interested in your personality
- **Work must be completed first!**

Germans and **Planning**

Coordination

Planen,
planen und
nochmals
planen



- Germans **plan everything ahead**, whether they like it or are forced to do it
- **Every detail** should be paid attention to and **bindingly confirmed**
- Keep an overview of important appointments. **Plan meetings** with colleagues **early enough**
- If you are invited for an appointment and **you do not cancel** e.g. via mail it is considered a confirmed appointment
- Following the „**No matter what**“ -principle you have to keep your word

Self-Initiative



- In the workplace there usually is a clear distinction of tasks resulting in **your own area of responsibility**
- Meaning, even as a new employee you often **quickly take responsibility** for your own tasks
- You are free to prioritise, plan and fulfill. What counts is the result within the given time frame
- **But: Think actively! Do not keep waiting for orders or continuous control from higher up in the hierarchy**



Conflicts & Criticism

Diplomacy

How to criticise



- To say what you dislike is **not customary in every culture**. It is however in **Germany**
- Germans **display criticism openly and sincerely**. They directly address what they dislike
- It is **normal to ask questions** in Germany if you have not understood something. This shows your motivation to understand processes and contribute to the common goals
- **Do not ignore problems**. Address them right away instead of hoping everything will be fine

Conflicts & Criticism- What Are Common Reasons

Not sticking to confirmed plans/promises

Not following rules and work discipline e.g. through carelessness

The **lack of professionalism** and qualifications



Insufficient **motivation**

Not admitting your mistakes and trying to hide them

Not opening your attitudes towards others (**Conflict avoidance**)

How to Solve Conflicts

Its common to use a **3rd party mediator**

Describe problems **without denying/washy-washing** your own responsibility

Conflict management is based on the exchange of opinions and identification of mutually acceptable goals

Try **not to avoid** colleagues if there is an ongoing conflict

Do not postpone problems, directly face them

Still answer calls /Emails
Silence can lead to escalation



German Work Culture-Check List

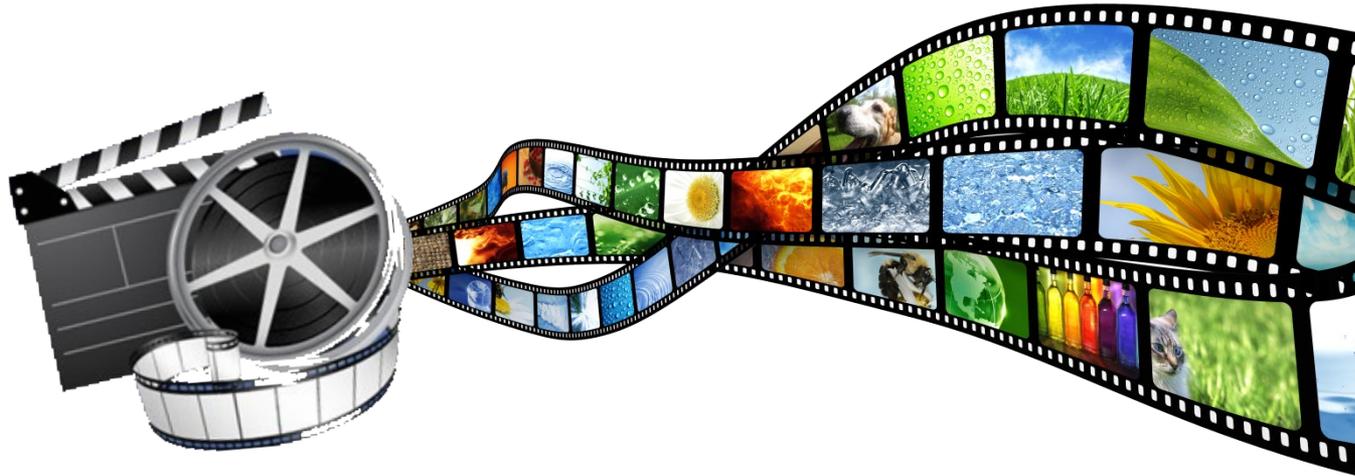


Work and Company Culture- Important Points

- Don't be overly optimistic. **Germans are realists** in the workplace.
- Prepare to deliver empirical facts. Germans don't like to guess.
- Plan **meetings in the long-term**. Short confirmation shortly before appointment.
- Prepare for less small talk. "Right down to business!"
- Communication in the office is formal (also among colleagues) "Sie"



Watch Video: Work Culture Experiences



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dbs4_hWK8HA